

REMARKS

None of the claims have been amended or cancelled. Claims 1-28 are pending, claims 9-26 and 28 have been withdrawn from consideration and claims 6 and 7 are objected. No new matter is presented in this Amendment. Claims 1, 9, 15, 20, 26, 27 and 28 are the independent claims.

Applicants note that the Office Action Summary indicates that none of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received. However, it is noted that a certified copy of the priority document was submitted on July 22, 2004 as evidenced by the enclosed copy of the postcard and Submission of Certified Copy included in the image file wrapper. Accordingly, Applicants assume that the Examiner merely checked the wrong box and intended to acknowledge receipt of these documents. It is respectfully request that in the next Office Action acknowledgment be made of the receipt of the certified copies of the priority documents.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER:

Claims 6-7 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1-5, 8 and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tamura et al. (Japanese Patent Application No. 2002-279972) in view of Hata (Japanese Patent Publication No. 11-307078).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Tamura has a publication date of September 27, 2002. In contrast, the instant application has a date of invention of at least July 12, 2002, as evidenced in the Declaration and the invention disclosure form. Accordingly, Tamura has a publication date which is after the invention date of the present application. Since Tamura does not qualify as prior art and since Hata is not relied upon to otherwise disclose the features of the instant application, it is

requested the rejection be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 503333.

Respectfully submitted,

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